

of the frontier, while the settlements of Virginia extended to a corresponding distance. Through the adjacent wilderness ran various lines of military posts, to make good the communication from point to point. One of the most important among these passed through the country of the Six Nations, and guarded the route between the northern colonies and Lake Ontario. This communication was formed by the Hudson, the Mohawk, Wood Creek, the Oneida Lake, and the river Oswego. It was defended by Forts Stanwix, Brewerton, Oswego, and two or three smaller posts. Near the western extremity of Lake Ontario stood Fort Niagara, at the mouth of the river whence it derived its name. It was a strong and extensive work, guarding the access to the whole interior country, both by way of the Oswego communication just mentioned, and by that of Canada and the St. Lawrence. From Fort Niagara the route lay by a portage beside the great falls to Presqu'isle, on Lake Erie, where the town of Erie now stands. Thence the traveller could pass, by a short overland passage, to Fort Le Bœuf, on a branch of the Alleghany; thence, by water, to Venango; and thence, down the Alleghany, to Fort Pitt. This last-mentioned post stood on the present site of Pittsburg, — the point of land formed by the confluence of the Alleghany and the Monongahela. Its position was as captivating to the eye of an artist as it was commanding in a military point of view. On the left, the Monongahela descended through a woody